

The Honorable Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell,

I am writing to urge to allow a full hearing of public comment before any further changes to the FCC rules concerning ownership of the number of stations in a market. It is not enough to say times have changes and the public has plenty of access to alternatives. Over-the-air stations are a totally different form of media -- as the public can receive the signals for free and the frequencies belong to the public. They are the only truly democratic form of communication in this country. For a few dollars a listener can buy a receiver and be connected to the voices of their community. In as much as a licensee receives monopoly use of the assigned frequency, for free and has their exclusive use of that frequency defended by the US government, the licensee should have responsibility to the community to provide service and not merely use it as a cash-cow. Part of that service is to provide diversity of news, music, opinion and public affairs. Much of that mandate was diluted in the eighties when the rules requiring stations to opposing views (fairness doctrine) were overturned.

Now more and more stations are being owned by fewer and fewer corporate entities. A quick tour down the dial in our region (and I'm sure yours as well) will reveal a dulling sameness in programming. The same formulaic music shows, national call-in programming that allows for only one point of view to be aired, news on many stations in the same market is provided by the same source, mediocre national news outlets offer little in insight or analysis at best and promotional infomercial providers for their corporate parents at worst. Indeed, on radio, there is little of thought providing value available except on the tiny non-profit segment of the dial and that is fractured between the public, community and religious broadcasters.

Our democracy is based and dependent on a free flow of ideas. Mass marketers of any kind pander to the lowest common denominator. Just as you will not see product innovation or creative new products at Wal-Mart, so you will not hear new and, experimental, or thought-provoking news and debate on giant conglomerate media. It is not in their marketing game plan.

So, again please allow the public to air their concerns before changing the rules.

Sincerely Greg Rossel